

join me in celebrating their fifth anniversary, in hopes of many more years of continued success.

**NATIONAL CHILDREN'S MENTAL
HEALTH AWARENESS DAY**

HON. JOHN ABNEY CULBERSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2007

Mr. CULBERSON. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. According to the U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health, approximately one in five of the children and adolescents in this country will experience the signs and symptoms of a mental health problem this year.

Today, local children's mental health initiatives across the nation will celebrate the strides they have made with children who are experiencing serious emotional and behavioral problems. I congratulate the Harris County Systems of Hope in Houston, Texas, which has been successful in using a family-driven approach to help emotionally disturbed youth become productive, responsible citizens and thrive in their communities, rather than getting caught in the juvenile justice system.

I urge my colleagues to join in celebrating National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day and supporting their local children's mental health initiatives.

**CONGRATULATING ROBERT
WAPLES**

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2007

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, dedicated and well-prepared first responders are one of the greatest assets to a community during an emergency. Today, I am honored to recognize Mr. Robert Waples of Rural/Metro Ambulance in Aurora, Colorado. Mr. Waples has been named as a Star of Life Award recipient by the American Ambulance Association for his exceptional service and commitment to the Colorado community.

Mr. Waples has been a member of EMS for the past 30 years, over which time he has sought to improve the standard of medical transportation for the Aurora region. His hard work and efforts are shining examples of leadership and vision, helping the ambulance community better respond to the public.

The Star of Life Award is given to outstanding individuals nationwide within the ambulance service field who have shown above-and-beyond dedication to their profession and society. Recipients are medics, dispatchers, and EMS personnel who have promoted the success of pre-hospital care and the effectiveness of medical transportation. This May, the American Ambulance Association will honor these men and women in Washington D.C., recognizing their heroic, life-saving achievements and contributions to their local communities.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. Waples for this honor. May he

continue to be an inspiration to his organization as well as to the medical transportation community as a whole.

**OUTSTANDING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS
FIRST CONGRESSIONAL
DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO**

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2007

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, the following graduating high school students from the First Congressional District of New Mexico have been awarded the Congressional Certificate of Merit. These students have excelled during their academic careers and proven themselves to be exceptional students and leaders with their scholastic achievements, community service, and participation in school and civic activities. It is my pleasure to be able to recognize these outstanding students for their accomplishments. Their parents, their teachers, their classmates, the people of New Mexico and I are proud of them.

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT AWARD WINNERS 2007

Daniel Lerma, Robert F. Kennedy Charter High School; Jennifer Roberts, Mountainair High School; Jennifer Johnston, Del Norte High School; James H. Caughren, Sandia Preparatory School; Arthur Chacon, Manzano High School; Siobhan Degnan, Southwest Secondary Learning Center; Abigail Martinez, South Valley Academy; Molly Nelson, Albuquerque Academy; Ashley Marie Maturino, Evangel Christian Academy; Ruby Trujillo, Rio Grande High School; Nicholas A. Maestas, Highland High School; David Aaron Parks, Cibola High School; Kelsey Byrne, Moriarty High School; Mathew Garcia, West Mesa High School; Eric Layer, Sandia High School; and Austin Baker, Temple Baptist Academy.

Angelica Aguilar, Los Puentes Charter School; Amanda Fernandez May, St. Pius X High School; Ashley Hope Darnell, Bernalillo High School; Sara Beth Dunham, Victory Christian School; Geri Lucia Lia, Menaul School; Corina Franco, New Futures School; Kelly Walker, Bosque School; Kelly D. Clingenpeel, Sierra Alternative High School; Audrey Wofford, Hope Christian School; Desiree J. Sandoval, Cesar Chavez Community School; Katie Gilliam, La Cueva High School; James C. Bohnhoff, El Dorado High School; Elizabeth McConaghy, Los Lunas High School; Charles Andres Padilla, East Mountain High School; and Stacy Daniels, Valley High School.

**TRIBUTE TO VAL MCCOMIE,
FORMER AMBASSADOR OF BARBADOS
AND FORMER ASSISTANT
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE
ORGANISATION OF AMERICAN
STATES**

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ambassador Val McComie, of Barbados, a consummate professional and diplomat who established a high bar for his

nation in the achievements of his illustrious career. I place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a tribute by Ambassador Michael King to Val McComie.

Today, I had the honor and privilege to speak at the funeral service for Ambassador Val McComie. My heart was warmed to see the outpouring of love by his family members and friends who attended the service to pay their final respects to a great man. It was obvious that he touched the lives of many with his wisdom, knowledge, and commitment to public service. He will be missed by many, but he leaves a legacy that will continue to inspire all those who knew him.

I was very encouraged by the tribute to Ambassador Val McComie by Ambassador Michael King, which was read at the funeral service today. I will reflect on the tribute when I think of my friend and his contribution to my life, democracy, and the people of the Caribbean.

**TRIBUTE TO THE HONOURABLE VALERIE T.
MCCOMIE, C.H.B.**

The Honourable Valerie Theodore McComie, C.H.B. was a quintessential Caribbean man. His whole life was spent teaching his students, his colleagues and interlocutors—and anybody with a keen ear—about the dynamics of Caribbean politics and society.

His strong love and appreciation for the Inter-American System played a major role in convincing the Government of Barbados to join the Organisation of American States in 1967 and to service the Permanent Mission with quality staff with the necessary professional and linguistic skills to interact effectively with their colleagues from the rest of the Hemisphere.

Val mentored anyone who was willing to listen to his wise advice and to benefit from his institutional memory. His knowledge of Latin America and the key decision-makers was incredible and one could only marvel at his ability to keep abreast of the rapid changes of government during a period when the word "democracy" was not often part of the lexicon of the Region.

He was a stickler for detail and thorough preparation and he always felt that all diplomats should not take the floor to speak unless they had full access to facts and knowledge about the subject. He demanded and expected a certain level of excellence in the area of diplomatic representation.

As Assistant Secretary General from 1980–1990 Val was a major source of advice to several CARICOM leaders on matters related to the Inter-American System. He relished the role like a kid in a candy store. Sometimes his frankness was not appreciated but he never wavered from his strong views.

I had the privilege to be in La Paz in October 1979 when he created history by winning a very close election to the post of Assistant Secretary General. It was not an easy task for him and the delegation of Barbados but there was no doubt that the esteem with which he was held in the Hemisphere was the primary reason for his success. His re-election by acclamation in Brazilia in 1984 bought similar joy to us.

Val loved sports, especially cricket and football. He always reminded me that he was close to selection for the Barbados Cricket Team. I can also recall the joy he felt when he returned from the 1982 Football World Cup in Spain and the attention he paid to subsequent events.

He followed in death by 100 days, his good friend, the Honourable Oliver Jackman, C.H.B., who also had the great honour of serving as Ambassador of Barbados to the